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ABSTRACT

Teachers willing to research available funding sources and prepare a detailed and comprehensive grant proposal may find themselves on the threshold of many successful grantsmanship adventures. Obtaining grant moneys can mean implementation of innovative ideas that normal budgeting can not provide for. Information is presented regarding: (1) the availability of grants for teachers; (2) the grant proposal process; (3) a sample grant proposal; and (4) resources for teachers wishing to apply for grants. (CB)

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GRANTS FOR TEACHERS:

A WAY TO FINANCE INNOVATIVE IDEAS

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GRANTS FOR TEACHERS:

A WAY TO FINANCE INNOVATIVE IDEAS

For several years, innovative teaching has been stressed in America. Despite this, teachers with innovative ideas have become discouraged. Teachers understand their classroom needs and attempt to meet these needs through innovative projects. Often teachers have ideas for larger projects that could greatly enhance student learning. Due to the lack of readily available money, these ideas are rarely implemented and teachers continue to be discouraged.

For this reason teachers need to be well informed about grantsmanship. Obtaining grant moneys can mean implementation of the innovative ideas that normal budgeting can no longer provide for.

THE APPEAL

Teachers can see the direct benefits of grant moneys on the education of children. Innovative ideas supported by grants can enhance basic skills development, give students more kinesthetic experiences, increase student motivation and promote new attitudes and behaviors.[1]

Besides reaping the short-term, immediate worths of grant moneys, teachers can see long-term benefits for themselves. Grants tend to encourage imaginative teaching. Grants create more effective teaching situations and bring new ideas and resources to the existing curriculum. [2] Better cooperation between teachers and an increase in teacher self-worth and morale are often noticed in schools participating in grantsmanship.

REALISM

There are fewer grants available today compared to five to ten years ago. The actual chance of getting a grant of substantial size is about one in ten.[3] Fewer corporations are giving grants each year.

Today grants do not always have well defined limitations. It must be understood that grant money cannot take the place of the general operating funds. Additionally, grants aren't often allocated for the maintenance of existing programs. They are frequently short-term, one-time funds.[4]

Teachers still should not be discouraged by this realism. Many millions of grant dollars are available each year if teachers know the right sources and the correct procedures for obtaining them.

TYPES OF GRANTS AVAILABLE

The first place to look for possible funding is in the local community. Educators have received grant moneys from banks, civic organizations, corporations, benevolent organizations, and local businesses. Business involvement is making education a less lonely, isolated enterprise and more the community effort it must be if public education is to fulfill its maximum potential. Participating businesses have provided funding for new programs, grants for teachers, and support for special educational ventures.

A wide variety of companies are working coast to coast to assist public education. Many of the programs are designed to assist entire school districts. Some corporate programs designed for individual teacher needs are:

General Electric Foundation. The foundation has a minigrant program for teachers who have proposals for innovative approaches to mathematics education. Contact Phyllis McGrath, G.E. Foundation, 3135 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield, Conn. 06431; (203)373-3224.

GTE Foundation. GTE offers Growth Initiatives for Teachers (GIFT), a grant program for secondary school math and science teachers. Contact GTE Foundation, Gift Program, CN 6330, Princeton, NJ 08541-6300 (Not available in every state.)

Radio Shack. In 1983, the company started the Tandy Educational Grants Program to support research and development activities that further the use of computers in schools. All professional teachers are eligible for the grants. Contact Fran McGehee, Marketing Information Representative, Radio Shack, 1700 One Tandy Center, Ft. Worth, TX 76102; (817)390-3300.

Numerous federal resources are also available. They are too numerous in nature to list. A listing of the education division programs should be of help in getting started.

1. Programs of the Office of Assistant Secretary. (202)245-7681.
2. Programs of the Office of Education. (202)245-8387.
3. Programs of the Institute of Museum Services. (202)245-6753.
4. Programs of the National Science Foundation. (202)357-7861.
5. Programs of the National Institute of Education. (202)254-5800.
6. Programs of the National Endowment of Humanities. (202)786-0438.
7. Programs of the National Endowment of Arts. (202)682-5400.

THE GRANT PROCESS

About one half of the grant process is spent getting started because of the difficulty in finding a suitable grantor. Some steps for increasing the chance of obtaining a grant should be followed.

In recent years a cooperative effort has been emphasized in grantsmanship. This may involve the coordination of professional efforts and or programs. The saying "Two heads are better than one" seems to hold true in the grant process.

The first step is to define your specific goal in terms of its scope, significance and needs. Find out what others are doing to solve that goal. State specifically what can be solved with the grant money.^

Meet with the building principal and as a team assess, examine and organize all possible funding sources. Develop a file or working list of these sources. Researching the sources in depth at this point will save much time later in the grant process.

When the best possible funding source has been located, make the first contact. It is best to set up an appointment to meet in person. During the first meeting, establish credibility as a good grantee and give background on the proposed project.

It is extremely important to give a brief description why the project is innovative and fundable. Be sure to show ingenuity, flexibility and enthusiasm throughout the meeting.

Most funding sources will ask for a very specific grant proposal to be submitted before a final decision is made to finance the project. The proposal serves a five fold function. It is a valuable marketing device, a concept paper, a specific plan of action, an evaluative design, and an agreement between the school and the funding source.[7]

THE PROPOSAL

The average proposal is four to eight pages in length. It begins with a cover page listing the name and address of the school, the teachers involved, the title of the proposed project, the amount of money requested and the principal's signature endorcing the project.

It is wise to include two to three support letters with the proposal. These letters enhance the credibility of the proposal by supporting the work of the applicants and an appreciation for the proposed project.[8]

Include an abstract or proposal summary that is precise yet brief.

Make a very clear statement of what the need is.
State the objective that will be met if the project is funded. List all the activities and materials that will be used to meet the goals. Include a budget that is determined by the objectives, activities and materials. Show how the project will be evaluated."
Have someone proofread and critique the proposal before submitting it to the funding source. An objective, uninvolved reader would be most desirable.
Submit the proposal as soon as possible. The average respose time is about two to four weeks. If the funding source has not contacted the school in a reasonable amount of time, contact them.
If funding is received, be sure to thank the source both privately and publicly. Give the source a progress report from time to time. Invite them to the school to see their money at work when appropriate.
The enthusiasm and diligence asserted by the school will help to insure the likelihood of further grant moneys coming to the school.

SAMPLE GRANT PROPOSAL

Following is an example of a modified, yet comprehensive grant proposal.

GRANT PROPOSAL

Project Title: Portable Writing Center
Name of Proposal Authors: John Smith, Pat Brown
Name of School: Peach Tree Phone No. 6784
Signature of Principal: *Dr. Fred Hipkins*

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of Students		5	8	9	7								

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Supplies	Instructional Materials	Subtotal
Instruction	$200	$500	$700
Other Services		$200	$200
		TOTAL	$900

STATE EDUCATIONAL NEED, PROBLEM, OR OPPORTUNITY

Inadequate preparation in language skills. The challenge is to provide meaningful activities with existing language arts program to enhance, expand language skills in grades 1-4. Providing a wide variety of resources in a mobile center will help.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (PROCESS OBJECTIVES)

WHO	ACCOMPLISH WHAT	BY DATE	COST
Teachers	Provide literature and experience.	Prior to writing center.	$300
Students	Participate in writing center activites.	Daily.	$300
Teachers/ Students	Compile student authored books.		$300

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES/EVALUATIONS
(WHAT WILL YOU HAVE IN THE WAY OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES OR PRODUCTS?)

The use of the portable writing center will:
-Provide enriching supplement to existing L.Arts.
-Significantly affect receptive language development, spelling accuracy and extension of thought.
-Help students view reading and writing as a thinking/communication process.

MORE RESOURCES

Once the school has begun grantsmanship, a thirst for additional funding sources and project ideas will grow. An incredible amount of material, ideas, information, and workshops are available on grantsmanship.

Some of these additional resources are:

1. **State and Federal Agencies.** These agencies give information on program changes, regulations, deadlines, and requests for proposals(REP). Request to be put on the mailing lists for these agencies.

2.**United States Printing Office,** Superintendent of Documents, Washington,D.C. 20202. The U.S. Printing Office will provide a list of all federal grants and awards programs.

3. **The Department of Education** issues a yearly guide that lists more than 100 discretionary grant programs. Application deadlines and a brief description of each program is included. Write to the United Department of Education, Management Support Branch, Room 3624, Grants and Contracts Service, Washington, D.C. 20202

4. **Corporation mailing lists.** These are good sources of data on corporate growth and giving.

5. **Local and surrounding Chambers of Commerce** often have information about available funding sources.

6. **The Foundation Center**, an independent national service organization, has libraries throughout the nation which offer a vast amount of information on foundations that provide grant moneys for education. Call toll free (800)424-9836 for addresses and telephone numbers of the nearest Foundation Center Library.

7. **The Internal Revenue Service** has records of tax returns(990-AR)made by foundations regarding their basic operations and grant moneys appropriated yearly.

8. **The Public Management Institute** offers a wide variety of resources on grantsmanship. Write to The Public Management Institute, 358 Brannan St., San Francisco, California 94107 (415)896-1900.

9. **The Grantsmanship Center** has many publications and training programs available. Write to The Grantsmanship Center, 1031 S. Grant Ave., Los Angeles, California 99015. (213) 749-4721.

10. Successful School Business Partnerships, an informative booklet on getting the community involved in public education, is available free from Private Sector Initiatives, Eileen Doherty, Rm. 151, White House, Washington, D.C. 20500.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this project has been to show teachers ways to bring exciting, creative ideas to life in their classrooms through grantsmanship.

The grant writing process is very complex. Participants will quickly see that there is no one way of proceeding through the grant process.

Teachers willing to research available funding sources and prepare a detailed and comprehensive grant proposal may find themselves on the threshold to many successful grantsmanship adventures.

The payoffs to teachers and the students involved in grant projects help public education to fulfill its maximum potential.

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